

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Dupree School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2004**

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**Dates of On Site Visit:** September 13 and 14, 2004

**Date of Report:** September 24, 2004

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Special Education Programs. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

**Promising Practice** The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.

**Meets Requirements** The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.

**Needs Improvement** The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left unaddressed may result in non-compliance.

**Out of Compliance** The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.

**Not applicable** In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Child find articles
- Screening announcement
- Referral/evaluation/placement data
- File reviews
- Enrollment data
- Annual application for IDEA funds
- General district information
- Screening list
- Part B Application for funds
- Data table I, age and placement alternatives
- Comprehensive plan
- Parent rights brochure
- Data by age and placement alternative
- District dropout rate,
- SAT 9 data
- Staff interviews
- Exit data table H
- Content standards
- Personnel data
- Staff certification
- Contract staff licenses
- District supervision/evaluation policy
- CSPD needs assessment data
- Teacher surveys

### **Promising practice**

The steering committee reports the district uses data-based decision-making procedures to review and analyze district level data to determine if students are making progress towards the state's performance goals and indicators. Records are kept on all elementary students containing the following: pre/post math and reading tests, STAR reading scores, STAR math scores, SAT scores, DRA reading, Kindergarten readiness assessment, First grade entrance assessment, Phelps Test, Success Maker, and Early Literature. Teachers analyze results to determine if progress is being made.

The steering committee stated the district has a TIGER Center, alternative behavior classroom, where students can be placed to address behavior concerns. Since the implementation of this classroom, the district has not placed any students in an out of district alternative educational setting. This has been a very positive practice as it allows the behaviors to be addressed before severe problems develop.

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee stated the district has an established and effectively implemented ongoing child find system to locate, identify and evaluate children with disabilities, ages birth through 21 years who may need special education. The district has an effective pre-referral and referral system in place to ensure students are identified without delay.

The steering committee noted the district does not have any private schools in the district. If there were students enrolled in a private school services would be provided in accordance with the requirements of

Individuals with Disabilities Act. The district ensures that special education and related services are provided in accordance with requirements of Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) when a child is placed in a private school or facility.

The district has an adequate supply of personnel who are appropriately supervised and fully certified to work with children with disabilities. The district staff completes needs assessment forms. The personnel development needs are identified and appropriate actions are implemented to meet those needs.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising practice**

Dupree School District utilizes an alternative behavior classroom to address behavior concerns. Through interviews, data and observation, the monitoring team noted the district has not placed any students in an out of district alternative educational setting. Behaviors are addressed prior to the development of severe behavior problems.

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with the steering committee data for Principle One, General Supervision as meeting the requirements. The monitoring team stated the district collects data and bases their decisions on the data to determine student progress towards the state's performance goals and indicators.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Files reviews

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee stated the district provides a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible children with disabilities. Procedures are in place in the comprehensive plan to ensure that eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative school days are being provided FAPE.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with areas identified as meeting requirements for free appropriate public education as concluded by the steering committee.

## **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A comprehensive evaluation is conducted by a team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Student file reviews
- Parent surveys
- Interviews
- Prior notice/consent form
- District procedure
- Student file reviews
- Teacher surveys
- MDT/eligibility report form
- Table A general district information
- Eligibility technical assistance guide
- In-service training agenda
- Cooperative forms
- Monitoring report
- CSPD needs assessment

#### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee noted the district provides appropriate written notice and informed consent before assessments are administered to a child as part of an evaluation or reevaluation. The district ensures that all children that are evaluated or reevaluated are tested in all areas of suspected disability. Functional assessments/reports have shown improvement this past year. The district ensures the proper identification of students with disabilities through the evaluation process. The district ensures that reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure students are appropriately evaluated for continuing eligibility.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting the requirements for appropriate evaluation as concluded by the steering committee.

<b>Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards</b>
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Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Parent rights brochure
- Prior notice form
- Surrogate parent technical assistance guide
- Data table L, complaints and hearings

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee reported the district ensures that parents are informed of their parental rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and ensures that parents have been fully informed in their native language or another mode of communication (if necessary) of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought.

The steering committee stated the district ensures the rights of a child are protected if no parent can be identified and provides the parents of a child in need of special education services the opportunity to inspect and review all educational records concerning the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child and the provision of a free and appropriate public education.

The steering committee stated the district has policies and procedures in place for responding to complaint actions that ensure compliance. The district has policies and procedures in place for responding to requests for due process that ensure compliance.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas identified as meeting the requirements for procedural safeguards as concluded by the steering committee.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- Comprehensive plan
- Teacher surveys
- Parent surveys
- Student file reviews
- Early Intervention (Part C) Exit Information
- Hearings
- Monitoring
- Comprehensive plan
- Prior notice form
- Parent right brochure
- IEP form

- Child count

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee stated the district ensures the IEP team is comprised of appropriate team membership and meets all identified responsibilities. The district ensures that the IEP contains all required content.

The steering committee reported the district ensures that transition plans for students are a coordinated set of activities, reflecting student strengths and interests, to prepare them for post school activities.

The steering committee noted the district has policies and procedures in place to ensure an appropriate IEP is developed and in effect for each eligible student.

### **Needs improvement**

The steering committee noted the district needs to add a statement to the prior notice form stating parents of a child with a disability have protection under the procedural safeguards of this article and a means by which a copy of a description of the procedural safeguards can be obtained.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising Practice**

Although the steering committee did not identify the vocational units through Northwest Area Schools as a promising practice, the monitoring team noted it through interviews and observation. The Dupree school district is a member of the Northwest Area Schools Multi-district/Educational Cooperative, which has given students in the district an opportunity to access a variety of vocational services. The vocational program has eight classroom units in the following areas: Agriculture, Basic Mechanics Technology, Building Trades, Computer Aided Design/Computer Aided Mechanics, CAD/CAM Electricity/Electronics, Health Occupations, Metal Fabrications and Quantity Foods. The vocational units are mobile and travel between eight districts. Each unit stays in a district for one semester. The units are on a four-year cycle giving students the opportunity to take each unit/class throughout their high school career. Students attend the class two periods per day allowing the student to earn one credit per semester for the class.

### **Meets requirements**

The steering committee agrees with steering committee data for Principle Five, Individualized Education Program as meeting requirements.

### **Needs improvement**

The monitoring team reviewed district forms, interviewed staff and agrees with the information noted by the steering committee.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

## **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

- State data tables
- Child count
- Surveys

**Promising practice**

The steering committee reports a promising practice in the provision of services in the least restrictive environment. Almost all students receive their instruction in the regular classroom. A large amount of time is devoted to inclusion services in the classroom for each student. Regular education and special education teachers work together to provide for the student's needs.

**Validation Results**

**Promising practice**

Through observation, review of data tables and staff interviews, the monitoring team agrees with the steering committee data for principle six, least restrictive environment.